Progrades for Pelacation and Global Resolutions to Vitta Victnamose Schools

This returnation discusses the possibilities for global relocation and resettlement of South Vietnamese refugees. It considers both the receptivity and the capability of foreign countries with respect to a refugee program. It should be emphasized that our judgments are based on a quick survey of off-the-shelf information; the views of US embassies throughout the world should be sought promptly.

We do not discuss the specific circumstances of the evacuation of the refugees from Vietnam, the logistical problems involved, or the scope or composition of the refugee flow itself. All of these considerations could have an important bearing on both the attitudes and the capabilities of foreign countries. For instance, an evacuation that could be presented as essentially humanitarian would no doubt strike a more responsive chord than an evacuation consisting almost exclusively of Vietnamese who have been closely associated with the US.

Staging Locations

General -- The list of countries available for relocating large numbers of Vietnamese is essentially limited to Thailand, the Philippines, some US bases in the Pacific, and -- possibly -- Indonesia and Malaysia. This is primarily because the withdrawal itself will most likely have to be completed on a short-duration, quick turnaround basis. Because these countries

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are concerned about their future relations with North Vietnam and China, they would be unlikely to accept Vietnamese refugees unless it was clearly on a short-term basis and if the US paid all the costs. Thailand in particular is both extremely sensitive to its position with North Vietnam and China and also mineful of its difficult problem with Vietnamese resettlement in the 1950s and 1960s. Persuading the Thais to help out on a large scale would probably require considerable pressure and/or inducements from the US. The current US/Thai issues that might be affected by relocation negotiations include: textile import quotas, civil aviation, and military aid.

Indonesia might accept short-term relocation (and possibly some longer-term resattlement -- see below) out of concern for a humanitarian image and interest in better treatment under the 1974 Trade Act (in spite of its status as an OPEC member) or a better position with the US Export-Import Bank.

The likely political reaction of Malaysia is unknown at this point and there is little that we can do to improve our economic relations there in the short run. The possibilities in this case, however, should be investigated.

<u>Likely Bases</u> -- Thailand is by far the optimum choice, both in terms of proximity and of facilities already in being at the six airbases built to support US operations in Indochina.



These are located at Takhli, Ubon, Udorn, Nakhon Phanom, Khorat, and Utapao. As the US military withdrawal from Thailand has proceeded Takhli has been closed; Ubon is in caretaker status; the majority of remaining US troops are stationed at Khorat, Udorn, and Utapao. In addition to barracks and administrative buildings, each of these bases could accommodate thousands of people in vast open areas. The 25,000 or so remaining US troops would form a ready-made cadre to assist in processing the evacuees.

In the Philippines two prominent prospects are available at Subic Bay and Clark Airbase. Both have adequate runways for jet aircraft, considerable housing and administrative facilities, and extensive open areas that could be used as tent sites. If necessary, some small spillover of evacuees could be accommodated in available housing facilities at Camp John Hay which is an adjunct to Clark Airbase.

Access to the several British and Australian bases in Singapore and Malaysia also can be considered. All are known to be capable of handling large aircraft. However, information on other features of the bases is not available.

Resettlement

General -- Some major regions and large numbers of individual countries can immediately be ruled out as having no significant role to play in resettlement of South Vietnamese refugees.

Thus, with the exception of France, Western Europe will be

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generally unreceptive to superantial interduce. It victnamese immigrants because of prevailing economic problems and high levels of unamployment, although some humanitarian response might be fortherwing from Italy and the United Kingdom.

Australia, a natural destination for refugees in the past, has already tightened up immigration from Western Europe and the United Kingdom because of growing unemployment and has long been very selective about Asian immigrants. Countries in South Asia and most of Africa and the Middle East are essentially not equipped or disposed to provide resettlement programs or areas. At the same time, numerous token efforts could add up to a fairly sizable total, and there is justification for at least approaching the United Nations* and every country with which we have friendly relations as soon as we have temporarily relocated the refugees.

A key unknown in planning at this stage is the composition of the refugee lists. Those with specialized skills or useful training will, of course, be the easiest to place and more countries will be willing to take them. The unskilled will be very difficult to resettle the more so because of the current global recession has increased unemployment virtually everywhere.

^{*}The UN is unlikely to become involved in the physical evacuation of refugees. Once they are out, however, the UN probably will assume some responsibility for the immediate placement and eventual resettlement of the refugees. Past efforts at permanent resettlement have not been notably successful, but specialized spencies of the UN -- the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHOR) and the United Nations Childrens Emergency Fund (UNICEF) -- probably will obtain contributions from individual governments to provide food, clothing, housing, and medical care for the refugees until places are found for them.

Countries -- The following country list, which reflects this fundamental problem, will clearly be subject to revision in the weeks that follow the initial evacuation effort.

France

than the rest of Western Europe and is generally better prepared to deal with additional absorption of foreign laborers. Some 4 million current residents of France are foreigners, and accepting numbers of Vietnamese in the tens of thousands would not add much to economic or social problems.

More significantly, the French have a particular historical tie and sense of moral obligation to the Vietnamese that would facilitate resettlement there. Some Vietnamese hold French passports, others already have families living in France, a significant number were trained there and speak French. The French government has already shown some willingness to resettle those who qualify by existing standards. Clearly, a major obstacle would be French perception of whether assistance might jeopardize their ties with Hanoi but, Hanoi probably looks for French aid for reconstruction and development in coming years.

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Carada

Although also suffering from the current global economic downturn, the Camadian scenery is still in one of the better positions to absorb additional labor. Unamployment is approaching a record St of the labor force, but much of this is concentrated in the popultus eastern provinces of Quebec and Ontario. Resource-rich western Canada remains relatively prosperous; and vast frontier areas, although somewhat hostile in climate and terrain, are largely unsettled.

Canada, moreover, has had the experience of settling a large number of Japanese and Chinese on its western coast.

Despite its postwar record of providing resettlement for thousands of European refugees, Ottawa will probably be reluctant to allow more than a few thousand Vietnamese refugees to settle. It would be difficult to convince the people of the central agricultural area to accept a large inflow of foreigners. Debate in the Canadian parliament and press comment support this conclusion.

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. Argentina

Argentina might accept 5,000-10,000 Vietnamese refugees if several other latin America countries also were involved in resettlement programs, and if approaches were made in a humanitarian context. Although the economy could absorb larger numbers, leftist opposition would probably prevent it.

Chile

Chile will view a request to resettle Vietnamese refugees as an opportunity to reinforce Chilean-US ties and possibly to improve its international image. The economy's small size, however, and the prospects of declining output and rising unemployment because of balance of payments problems would make it difficult to absorb more than 3,000-5,000 refugees. Clearly the US would have to finance the resettlement. In addition, Chile would hope to improve its chances of obtaining balance of payments support.

Brazil.

The Brazilian economy is experiencing economic problems comparable to those of many other parts of the less developed world and has lost close to \$1.8 billion in foreign exchange reserves since mid-1974. Despite this, the good longer term growth prospects and favorable experience with the absorption of Asian laborers suggest a strong opportunity. The US, however, would have to provide short-term payments support and, in addition, might be asked for a more positive response on any of the following issues:

- *renewal of the Cotton Textile Agreement;
- ·renewal of the International Coffee Agreement;
- 'development of Brazil's nuclear energy capability;
- •problems of additional countervailing duties against

 Brazilian exports.

context of its international image in the Third World. It will probably view even an indirect link to US policies toward Indochina as a cost. On the other hand, it is concerned that it has poor standing in humanitarian causes and can probably be persuaded by a personal appeal from President Ford to overcome its initial reluctance.

African Counties

Although potential numbers of refugees are small, particular historical patterns and ties can be tapped in this part of the world. In Togo, Upper Volta, the Central African Republic, and the Congo, there is a historical link through the French army in Indochina and a favorable attitude toward Vietnamese. President Banda of Malawi has supported US policy in Indochina and is interested in the humanitarian implications. Some of the countries, if solidly assured of US financial support, might be persuaded to accept those Vietnamese who meet their own needs for human capital.

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Iran might take some Victnamese refugees. The government already has offered to accept "a number" of orphans from South Victnam and to arrange for their transportation.

The economy needs skilled and semi-skilled laborers and has tried recently to recruit such workers from several Asian countries. At present there are about 400 South Rorean workers there, as well as a comparable number of Filipinos. Iran thus might be persuaded to accept a limited number of Victnamese with needed scientific or technical skills. Obvious political and cultural problems, however, would prevent Iran from becoming a major area for resettlement. Tehran already has its hands full with large numbers of Kurdish refugees.

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Indonesia

Although Indonesia does not look like a wary good prospect for Vietnamese resettlement because of its low living standards, US leverage might create some possibilities. Were we to assure the Indonesians that resettlement would be entirely funded by the US and other donors, there is at least a chance they would consider resettling unskilled Vietnamese in the outer islands. Although domestic resettlement programs from overcrowded Java to the underpopulated outer islands have existed for years, they have had little success.

The Indonesian reaction to this sort of approach is difficult to gauge. There is no doubt that the Indonesians feel they have received little in return for having participated in the ICCS in South Vietnam; on the other hand they may feel some residual obligation from this role.

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Conclusions

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The following key points emerge from this initial overview:

- The first stage of relocation will probably take place largely within Southeast Asia because of logistical constraints, but there are probably adequate facilities that can be used or borrowed at fairly limited costs to the United States. The Philippines and Thailand have the best nearby facilities. Thailand will play a pivotal role as a staging area and should be approached to sort out its political and economic demands as soon as possible. The United States and other donors will have to bear all the direct costs of evacuation and maintenance in relocation centers.
- In the subsequent resettlement phase, many countries will probably take at least some Vietnamese, but few will agree to large numbers. Outside the United States, the best prospects would appear to be in Latin America (especially Brazil, Chile, and Argentina) and in France.

 In the aggregate, these and other countries might be encouraged to accept 50,000-100,000 persons. This range would be raised somewhat if there were a snowballing effect from strong popular or press support for the humanitarian aspects of the program.

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mix of skills, age, and literacy of the group that
is actually evacuated. It will obviously be easier
to place the younger, healthier, and more talented.

In any case, the US will be asked to finance at least
the initial resettlement costs. The larger the number
that must be resettled, the greater will be the
indirect costs of the US in the form of commercial, aid,
or political concessions.

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